

THURSDAY, JULY 18
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LEADER
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BASIC COMBAT TRAINING MUSEUM TURNS ...

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July highlights minorities' mental health

By **CAPT. ANTIONETTE DINGLE**
Moncrief Army Health Clinic

July is National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness about the mental health struggles minority communities face. This month aims to highlight the unique challenges and disparities minority groups encounter when accessing mental health care and support.

It also serves as a platform to promote understanding, provide resources, and encourage open conversations about mental health within minority communities.

Minority populations, which include racial and ethnic groups, LGBTQ+ individuals, and those with disabilities, often experience higher rates of mental health disorders and face significant barriers to accessing adequate care.

Factors such as cultural stigma, discrimination, a lack of culturally competent care, language barriers, and socioeconomic disparities all contribute to the mental health disparities experienced by these communities.

This year, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health is focusing on improving mental health outcomes for racial and ethnic minority and American Indian/Alaska Native communities through its 2024 theme, "Be the Source for Better Health: Improving Health Outcomes Through Our Cultures, Communities, and Connections."

This theme emphasizes the importance of cultural competency, community en-



Courtesy graphic

National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month is dedicated to raising awareness of the mental struggles that minority groups face.

gagement, and connection to improve health outcomes.

During National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month, it is important to amplify the voices of minority individuals and promote mental health education and advocacy within these communities.

By fostering open and honest conversations about mental health and challenging the stigma surrounding seeking help, we can empower individuals to prioritize

their well-being and seek the support they need. By recognizing and addressing the unique challenges faced by minority communities, we can take important steps toward creating a mental health landscape that is truly inclusive, supportive, and accessible for everyone.

Additionally, raising awareness about the availability of culturally sensitive mental health resources and support services can help bridge the gap in accessibility for

minority populations.

Let us pledge to increase awareness, understanding, and action in support of mental health equity for all.

If you or someone you know needs help with their mental health, send a text to 988 on your phone or 988lifeline.org. Crisis counselors are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week all year round.

For more information, please visit minorityhealth.hhs.gov.

ON THE COVER

Museum Technician Stephanie Vander-Knyff (Sapp) poses on a tank outside the U.S. Army Basic Combat Training Museum at Fort Jackson. The museum is celebrating its 50th anniversary. See Pages 6-7



Courtesy photo

THE FORT JACKSON LEADER

"We Make American Soldiers"

Fort Jackson, South Carolina 29207

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Golfers to launch bombs at long drive event

Leader Staff Reports

The big bombers are coming to Fort Jackson. No, we aren't talking about B-1, B-2 and B-52s. We're talking about the golfers set to launch drives way longer than most of us can even imagine.

The World Long Drive and Military Long Drive championships are set to tee off tomorrow for a weekend of "full-throttle" competition.

According to the WLD, the competition is to see which of roughly 150 world-class long drivers can outlast their competition.

The event, taking place July 19-22 at the Fort Jackson Golf Club, will be the second time it took place on post.

In 2019, Mikael Dubois, a former Air Force pilot, won the MLD with a 326-yard drive.

"The nerves maybe helped (me succeed)," Dubois said in 2019. "My training was not very much." Dubois was in the Air National Guard.

Twelve active duty, retired, or reserve service members from around the country will be competing at the event. The winner of the military championship will automatically qualify to compete in the open division at the World Long Drive Championship, held Aug. 8-11 in Atlanta.

Admission to the event is free.

The schedule is:

FRIDAY, JULY 19

Senior Division

8-9:30 a.m. – Senior Division – Preliminary Rounds Group 1

9:30-11 a.m. – Senior Division – Preliminary Rounds Group 2

11:15 a.m. – Senior Division Round of 16, Quarterfinals, Semifinals, Finals

Amateur Division

1-2:30 p.m. – Amateur Division – Preliminary Rounds Group 1

2:30-4 p.m. – Amateur Division – Preliminary Rounds Group 2

4:15 p.m. – Amateur Division Round of 16, Quarterfinals, Semifinals, Finals

SATURDAY, JULY 20

Open Division – Round 1

9-10:30 a.m. – Open Division Preliminary Rounds Group 1



Leader file photo

Mikael Dubois celebrates winning the 2019 Military Long Drive Championship held at Fort Jackson.

10:30 to noon – Open Division Preliminary Rounds Group 2

1-2:30 p.m. – Open Division Preliminary Rounds Group 3

2:30-4 p.m. – Open Division Preliminary Rounds Group 4

SUNDAY, JULY 21

Open Division Round 2

8-9:30 a.m. – Open Division Preliminary Rounds Group 1

9:30-11 a.m. – Open Division Preliminary Rounds Group 2

Open Division Round 3

Noon to 1:30 p.m. – Open Division Preliminary Rounds Group 1

Women's Division

2-3:30 p.m. – Women's Division Preliminary Rounds Group 1

3:45-4:15 p.m. – Women's Division Quarterfinals Matches

Military Division

5-6:30 p.m. – Military Division Preliminary Rounds Group 1

6:45-7:15 p.m. – Military Division

Quarterfinals, Semifinals

MONDAY, JULY 22

12:30 p.m. – Silver Wings Parachute demonstration

12:45 p.m. – National Anthem by 282nd Army Band

1-2 p.m. – Women's Semifinals, Finals / Military Finals

3-5 p.m. – Open Division Quarterfinals, Semifinals, Finals

5:45-7:45 p.m. – World Long Drive Team Cup

Community Updates

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Change of Command

9 a.m., Aug. 23, Hilton Field. Maj. Gen. Jason E. Kelly will relinquish command of Army Training Center and Fort Jackson to Maj. Gen. Daryl O. Hood.

Road Name Changes

Fort Jackson has renamed numerous roads and streets on post that were named after Confederate leaders, battles and units. This is part of efforts to rename Department of Defense installations, streets, buildings and ships that featured names commemorating the Confederacy. These name changes, effective Jan. 1, have already been made by the U.S. Postal Service. To learn which road names have changed, scan the QR code or visit home.army.mil/jackson/about/fort-jackson-road-re-naming.



SPRC Yoga Hours

The Yoga class schedule for June has changed. Classes are now:

Tuesdays: Power Yoga: 8-8:30 a.m. (Power Yoga)

Wednesdays: 6-7 a.m. (Warrior Yoga) and 12:15-1 p.m. (Mindful Movement and Meditation)

Thursdays: 11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. (Warrior Yoga)

The Friday class has been cancelled.

Safety Classes

The Installation Safety Office presents various safety training classes. To register for the Army Traffic Safety Training or Local Hazards training classes, go to the website <https://imc.army.mil/airs/default.aspx>. To register for the Unit Safety Officer training, contact your Safety Specialist.

■ Basic Riders Course:

July 30-Aug. 1 (five seats open); Aug. 6-8 (six seats open)

■ Advanced Riders Course

July 23 (six seats open); Aug. 13 (six seats open); Aug. 20 (six seats open)

■ Local Hazards Course: June 22, 29 and Aug. 5, 12, 19 and 26.

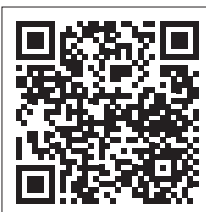
■ Intermediate Drivers Course: Today (30 seats open); Aug. 15 (30 seats open)

■ Remedial Drivers Course: Aug. 21 (12 seats open)

■ Unit Safety Officer Course: Aug. 6-7 (22 seats open)

Needs Assessment Survey

Help our Education Center to better understand and meet your educational needs on Fort Jackson. Your participation and feedback is valuable and will be utilized to help improve ACES education programs and services. You need to take the needs assessment survey. Scan the QR code to begin. The Fort Jackson Education Center can be reached via email atusarmy.jackson.93-sig-bde-mbx.dhr-jacksonedcenter@army.mil, or via phone at (520) 691-4472.



School and Sports Physicals

Moncrief Army Health Clinic is conducting school and sports physicals Mondays and Wednesdays until July 31. Parents/guardians may bring children from 4:30-6:30 p.m. (You must be checked in by 6 p.m.) Required school immunizations can be done at this time. This is only open to MAHC enrolled children in grades K-12. Upon arrival check-in with the Integrated Health Medical Home on the ground floor of MAHC, Room #2318A. Please bring

any external immunization records and required sports/school physical forms for your child's school program. To expedite the process, complete the patient information portion of each form prior to arrival. Patients will not be checked in until the patient portion of the forms are completed. For more information email For questions, contact tashiana.a.rodgers.civ@health.mil.

100% Housing Inspections

Housing officials recently announced that congressionally-mandated 100% inspections of on-post housing units will take place in August. The residents will soon be able to schedule those inspections using an online tool.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

TOMORROW - MONDAY

Military Long Drive Competition

Come out and watch the World Long Drive and the 2024 Military Long Drive Championship at the Fort Jackson Golf Club. The schedule of events can be found on Page 3.

MONDAY

Fort Jackson Soccer Night

6-7:30 p.m., Hilton Field Sports Complex. Come join us for a night of soccer and free play. For more information, call (803) 751-3096

TUESDAY

Scams & Identity Theft Workshop

10-11 a.m., 9810 Liberty Division Road, Room 119. Army Community Service in partnership with South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs, shares tips to help you protect your identity and finances in support of 2023 National Consumer Protection Week. Registration is required. For more information or to register, call (803) 751-5256 (option 3).

FERS Pre-Retirement Seminar

Deadline for events to be included in the Community Updates is one week before publication. Include the time, date and place the event will occur, as well as other necessary information.

If you submit an article on an event that already has taken place, please send it as soon as possible. Tuesday is the last day we will be able to accept an article for publication the following

Thursday. Include the date and place of the event, as well as a description of what took place. Please include quotations, if possible.

With any photo you submit, include IDs — rank, unit, and first and last names. All submissions will be edited and published using Associated Press Style.

Questions? Call 751-3615.

Fort Jackson Movie Schedule

3319 Jackson Blvd.

Phone: 751-7488

SATURDAY, JULY 20

■ Inside Out 2 (PG) 2 p.m.

TUESDAY, JULY 24

■ The Bikeriders (R) 2 p.m.

● Ticket sales open 30 minutes before each movie.

● Movie times and schedule are subject to change without notice.

3-7 p.m., MS Teams. Upon completion of the pre-retirement briefing, participants will know the requirements for retirement eligibility, consequences of making a deposit/redeposit, survivor annuity elections, eligibility for continuing FEHB/FEGLI into retirement, and the process for submitting a retirement application.

JULY 26

Amnesty Day

7 a.m. to 2 p.m., Darby Field. Fort Jackson is holding an Amnesty Day July 26 to give Soldiers and Department of Defense civilian cardholders to turn in unauthorized ammunition and other ordnance in their possession without fear of reprisal. For more information, call (803) 751-2541.

AUG. 3

Saluda River Tubing

9 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. Join Fort Jackson Outdoor Recreation for a relaxing two-hour trip tubing down the Saluda River.

See **EVENTS:** Page 10

THE FORT JACKSON LEADER

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First Soldiers graduate new training course

By **CHRISTOPHER HURD**
Army News Service

Army recruiting brigades and battalions will soon get new technical experts as the first group of warrant officers graduated July 11 from the final phase of the talent acquisition technician training course.

The class of 25 warrant officers completed two weeks of fundamental data analytics training at the Adjutant General School on Fort Jackson, South Carolina followed by eight weeks of technical training at the Recruiting and Retention College at Fort Knox, Kentucky.

“Through experimentation with new partnerships, and a thriving learning environment, these warrant officers are intended to be the linchpins in their future assignments,” said Col. Christine Rice, officer in charge of the Army’s workforce redesign initiative. “They will be strategic advisers to the commanders on the ground that are recruiting every single day for our nation.”

Army senior leaders created this new military occupational specialty, along with an enlisted talent acquisition specialist MOS, when they announced changes to the recruiting enterprise last fall.

Since then, a team from the U.S. Army Recruiting Command, the Adjutant General School and the Recruiting and Retention College worked with industry and academic partners to create this course.

The Army selected these warrant officers based on past performance and attributes they displayed that best fit the talent acquisition career field.

These Soldiers completed the training program that features 75 lessons designed to teach them how to leverage technology, social media, artificial intelligence and other tools to make an impact at their recruiting commands.

“I think with this MOS coming out, we are one piece of a transformation process for the recruiting environment within the army, and I think our piece



Photo by LARA POIRRIER

Twenty-five warrant officers completed the Talent Acquisition Course July 11 to become Talent Acquisition Technicians, the Army’s newest Military Occupational Specialty, 420T. The graduation marked the end of a journey, which started in March.

of it is to make our units more efficient,” said course graduate Chief Warrant Officer 2 Sasha Adams Gibson. “So, the more efficient our recruiting can be, then the more Soldiers that we can get into our actual force command units that make us more ready, agile and prepared to defend the nation.”

The talent acquisition technicians will arrive at either a recruiting brigade or battalion in late August or early September. The course developers will take the feedback they gained from this group and apply it to future classes.

“I think the great thing here is that you have an opportunity to make changes on the fly as we learn from these warrant officers,” Rice said. “The feedback they gave us to develop better training, to change, and to make improvements is going to be extremely beneficial for this occupation in the future.”

The next two groups of Soldiers to attend the training will follow a slightly different path. They are noncommissioned officers who must first attend warrant officer candidate school before

going to the Adjutant General School for four weeks.

The next group is scheduled to attend warrant officer school in September, followed by the talent acquisition technician training to close out the calendar year. The third group will follow them in January with the hope of having them at their units by next spring.

These three initial groups will fill approximately half of the talent acquisition technician career field as the Army continues its recruiting enterprise transformation.

“(Recruiting) is ever evolving,” Gibson said. “So, I have to look at how I can make my unit better when I arrive. I also have to take the time to reassess how I can make this job better and (classes) after us better, so that we can become more efficient and actually make that impact that was envisioned for us to make.”

The enlisted talent acquisition specialist course is still being developed and the team plans to use what they learned from this course to help shape that curriculum.

Chairman: NATO is ‘Stronger together’

By **JIM GARAMONE**
DOD News

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization was born in 1949 out of the simplest premise: “We are stronger together,” said Air Force Gen. CQ Brown, Jr, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, July 11.

Brown spoke at the Truman Library Institute event marking the 75th anniversary of the signing of the Washington Treaty that established NATO. The event was in the National Archives, which holds the original treaty and subsequent ratifications.

President Harry S. Truman called the collective defense treaty a simple document, Brown said. But President Truman then said that if it existed in 1914 or 1939 and was supported by the 12 nations who negotiated the treaty, “I believe it would have prevented the acts of aggression, which led to two world wars.”

NATO grew out of the suffering and destruction of all wars and was “born out of hope for a better future and a commitment to preserve peace and stability,” the chairman said. “President Truman and his fellow leaders knew that the best protection against an uncertain future was to strengthen the partnership of nations.”

The alliance has been a rock of stability for the past 75 years and it has deterred aggression, promoted prosperity and provided a source of strength for the world, he said. “Today, the purpose and principles of the NATO alliance are being tested in an increasingly complex global security environment,” the senior U.S. military official said.

BCT museum

turns

50

Basic Combat
Training Museum

Established in 1972 with an initial collection of only 20 artifacts, the U.S. Army Basic Combat Training Museum officially opened to the public on July 18, 1974. Since then, the museum's role in preserving the history and heritage of Basic Training grew along with its current collection of over 4,500 objects.

The mission of the museum is to educate through collecting, preserving, and interpreting artifacts representing the history, heritage, and culture of the Army and Fort Jackson.

"As an institution of knowledge, we use our exhibits and displays to tell the stories and narratives of our Soldiers," said Fort Jackson Museum Director Henry Howe. "We remind and educate the public about the professionalism and dedication of their sons and daughters, about their commitment and sacrifices."

Today, the museum is a favorite destination on Family and graduation days.

More than 90,000 Soldiers and civilians visit each year making the museum one of the most visited both in the city of Columbia and in the nationwide Army Museum Enterprise.

"At a time when connections between the Army and society are weaker than they have been, Army museums are a popular and engaging bridge between the two communities," said Charles Bowery, Center of Military History executive director.

The museum thematically exhibits an assortment of military weapons, uniforms, and equipment to illustrate the basic training of America's Soldiers, both yesterday and today.

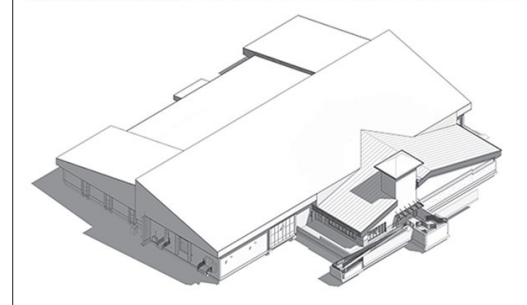
"Objects are a tangible source for historical instruction," Bowery added. "They have a unique and undeniable power to communicate the Army's history and heritage to a variety of audiences: Soldiers and their Families, (Department of the)

Army Civilians, the United States government, and, critically, the American public."

The museum's permanent exhibits are supplemented with temporary exhibitions that highlight special areas of interest, such as new artifact acquisitions or historic events like D-Day.

"While reaching our 50-year milestone is a significant achievement, our work here is far from complete," Howe said. "As long as there is a U.S. Army, our museum will be dedicated to preserving the history of how civilians are transformed

FUTURE PLANS: The New Museum of the American Soldier



into Soldiers."

Change is coming for the Fort Jackson museums. Plans are in the final development phase for expanding the museum and rehousing it along with the Adjutant General and Finance Corps museums in a new location under one roof. After renovations and exhibit design, the Joe E. Mann Center (3392 Century Division Ave.) will begin a new chapter serving as the new Museum of the American Soldier.



(Above) Medal of Honor recipient Desmond Doss visits with museum curator Judy Matteson. Doss trained at Fort Jackson with the 307th Infantry Regiment, 77th Infantry Division during World War II.



(Top middle) Grand re-opening of the expanded museum on Feb. 2, 1990. Emma Joe Davis, chief curator of the Center for Military History, cuts the ribbon with Maj. Gen. John A. Renner, commanding general.



(Top far right) Uniform pageant in commemoration of the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution, 1986.



(Far right middle) Clayton B. Kleckley, museum director, instructs trainees, circa 1970s.



(Far right bottom) Kleckley, center, with veterans of the 2nd Platoon, 87th Recon Cavalry.

(Middle) Barracks interior recreation. The exhibit remains today with updates.

(Middle left) An early diorama showing how Soldiers eat chow.

(Right) Early artifact conservation, unknown museum staff left, Kleckley on the right.



Courtesy photos

NATO

Continued from Page 5

Brown laid out those challenges, which are familiar to anyone who has read the National Defense Strategy. The challenges the United States sees emanate from the People's Republic of China, Russia, Iran, North Korea, and violent extremism. "All five of these challenges are active at the same time and they are becoming interconnected," Brown said.

China continues to undertake aggressive military behavior in the South China Sea, while also attempting to increase its global influence through economic and political statecraft, he said. Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine is now in its third year, but Russian President Vladimir Putin also seeks to build novel military capabilities and to diversify his nuclear arsenal.

Iran attempts to further conflict and regional influence through its proxies, while North Korea persists destabilizing the region with ongoing ballistic missile research and testing, the chairman said. And violent extremists continue their vile attacks.

"This is not the first time that America and its allies have faced challenging times, and Truman and the leaders of the 11 other founding nations knew in 1949 that we are stronger together," Brown said.

NATO is more than just 32 like-minded nations and more than just unifying military force in 32 countries. "NATO demonstrates the strength possible when nations with shared values come together to focus on achieving a shared vision," he said. "Collectively, NATO's most significant strategic asset is the relationships and collaboration we have with our allies and partners."

While this may be based on a simple premise, it requires hard work and cooperation. "To maximize the advantage, we must be truly integrated," Brown said. "We can't develop our respective national plans and capabilities with allies as an afterthought. We need to start at the beginning with the end in mind. We, as an alliance, need to be integrated by design."

This means joint exercises so forces can meet one another and understand how they work, train and live.

"True integration means we can adapt to dynamic situations," the general said. "True integration allows us to shape crises rather



Photo by NAVY PETTY OFFICER 1ST CLASS ALEXANDER C. KUBITZA

Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III hosts the 23rd iteration of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group alongside NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, Ukrainian Defense Minister Rustem Umerov, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Air Force Gen. CQ Brown, Jr., at NATO headquarters in Brussels, June 13.

than respond to crises. Integration just doesn't happen. It takes work. Relationships take work, consensus takes work. But the results of our work are far greater than the sum of our parts. We are stronger together."

This is demonstrated in the alliance's response to the largest war in Europe since World War II. "Today, I see the power of countries working together in Ukraine's fight to defend itself from Russian aggression," Brown said. "That Russian aggression (which was) designed to splinter NATO, has had an opposite effect — bringing life into the alliance with a renewed purpose and increasing its size."

For more than two years, a group of 50 nations including all 32 members of NATO, have been meeting monthly to organize support for Ukraine, he said. The Ukraine Defense Contact Group has coordinated more than \$95 billion in direct security assistance and trained over 143,000 Ukrainians. "These efforts have been critical reason why Ukraine has been successful in repelling larger and supposed more capable force," Brown said. "Because we are stronger together."

Brown shared his expectations for the U.S. joint force which are intertwined with NATO. His first expectation is the U.S. military, and its NATO allies have to understand that honing

warfighting skills must have primacy. Second, the alliance must modernize and aggressively lead in operationalizing new concepts and approaches. Finally, he expects that all service members must know that trust is the foundation of the military profession.

"Honing our warfighting skills has primacy in all we do," Brown said. "We exist to fight and win our nations' wars. We want to be so good at what we do, that our adversaries never want to engage us in conflict. We want to be the worst nightmare to fight. These past 75 years, NATO has been effective because — together — we've built credible deterrence."

The NATO nations urgently need to modernize and aggressively pursue new concepts and approaches. This will ensure "that we have the right tools, capabilities and strategies to adapt to the dynamic and complex environment of the future," he said. "NATO is doing this (so) that the set of operational plans are part of the concept for deterrence and defense of the Euro-Atlantic area. NATO has a blueprint to continually modernize collective defense."

Finally, Brown said that no matter the nation, "every military capability we have is a static display without our service members," Brown said. "Trust is the foundation of our profession ..."

ACS offers scam warning

By **ROB MEREDITH**
Army Community Service

There have been an increasing number of fraudster and scammers posing as members of the military deployed overseas, specifically in Afghanistan and other foreign locations. They seek to enter online relationships with unsuspecting victims. After entering an online relationship, these scammers begin to ask for money for various things, ranging from the purchase of items to funds for transportation.

Fraudsters create fake profiles on dating apps, websites, and social media. They then identify vulnerable targets such as anyone they believe to be lonely or gullible. Once you're in an online relationship, they escalate quickly. Once you're hooked, they ask for favors. By the time you realize they're a scammer, they disappear.

Victims have been getting contacted by email from supposed members of the military or members of military families who need money for a variety of things, ranging from funds for a "secure phone line" to travel expenses for a service member arriving home after a deployment. Sometimes these fraudsters may provide a fake copy of a military ID card or make claims to be a member of a Special Forces team who needs to keep personal information secret.

If you believe you may be a victim of one of these scams, break contact with the scammer. If you've provided your personal information or wired money, they may be able to create fake accounts in your name or access your accounts. Alert your finan-

Soldier discovers joy of triathlons

By **JOE LACDAN**
Army News Service

Growing up in the lakefront city of Milwaukee, Christyn Gaa could shoot hoops, dribble a soccer ball and hit softballs.

Years later, while studying nursing at Marquette University, she even joined an intramural basketball squad.

“Team sports was really kind of all that I knew,” said Gaa, now a major and nurse practitioner at Fort Bliss, Texas. Gaa recently finished third in the women’s masters division at the 2024 Armed Forces Triathlon Championship on June 29, 2024.

Even after commissioning into the Army following her graduation from Marquette, she had always been part of a larger team as an Army nurse and clinical nurse officer.

Then, while watching a triathlon after arriving at her first duty station, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, she decided to give the sport a try. The multi-event sport offered her the solace of individual training, a contrast to her upbringing.

So in the backdrop of the Pacific Northwest, she began training for the triathlon. She started by running and biking a few miles and swimming a few meters each week before gradually building her endurance.

“I was kind of immediately hooked,” she said. “I’d gotten a road bike after I graduated college, between that and my first assignment in the Army, I just started riding and really enjoyed that. I think I just liked the challenge of doing the multi sports, and then just kind of fell in love with the training for doing it all.”

Learning to train for the triathlon also helped Gaa chart her career goals, she said. After completing assignments working in the emergency care in Mosul, Iraq and as a critical care nurse at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany, she served as a bridge nurse for U.S. Army Cadet Command. Then the University of Maryland-Baltimore accepted Gaa into its medical graduate program where she earned her doctorate in nursing practice.

“(Competing in the triathlon) has mentally made me stronger and more resilient,” Gaa said. “Like to take on harder tasks and doing things that are uncomfortable ... having habits like having some consistency in the way that you do

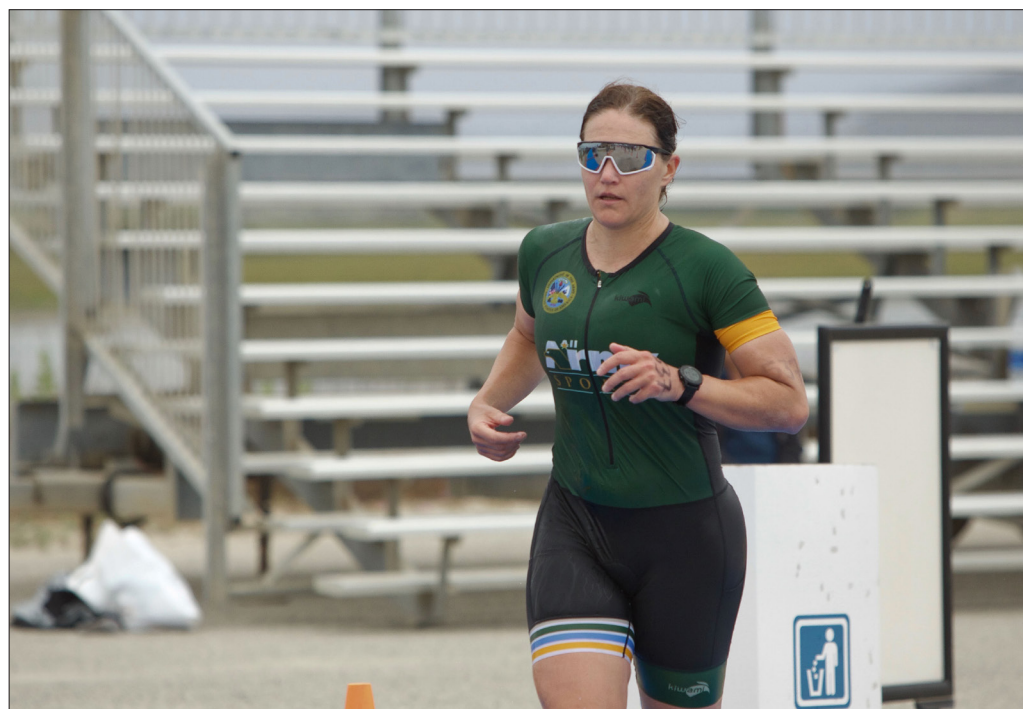


Photo by MASTER SGT. SHARILYN WELLS

Maj. Christyn Gaa, who has competed in about 40 triathlons, finished third in the women’s masters division at the 2024 Armed Forces Triathlon Championship.

things really helps to achieve your goals.”

After seeing her potential in the sport, Gaa hired a training coach while attending graduate school. With her coach’s guidance, Gaa began a more strenuous workout regimen.

Gaa initially struggled with the running leg of the triathlon. But she learned to balance her efforts with the bike race to have better endurance for the run. Then the Wisconsin native began placing in the top 10 for her age group while also learning to pace her swim better.

Now, 16 years and 40 races later she’s set larger goals.

While stationed at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, she qualified for the Hawaii triathlon state championship. She then achieved a dream she had years ago, earning a spot at the famous Ironman World Triathlon Championships in Kailua-Kona.

Hosted by the World Triathlon Corporation on the big island of Hawaii, competitors from across the globe compete by swimming in Kailua Bay and running and riding on the island’s challenging landscape.

“When I first started triathlon, I thought, ‘Oh my God, like competing at Kona one day would

be incredible,’” Gaa said. “And then ... I qualified for Kona, that’s not something I would have ever thought would happen. But I think every little goal that I’ve set, I’ve been able to reach, and I think it’s just because of the process that you go through and the journey that you take to get through it.”

In 2022, Gaa suffered a lower-leg injury on her left side, limiting her performance at the 2022 nationals. She had to adjust and limit her training. She finished fourth among 36 competitors in her age group.

“When you kind of do this as an athlete, it kind of becomes a piece of your identity,” Gaa said.

Gaa learned to adapt her training while battling the ailment, working on her swimming and bike riding when she couldn’t run.

Gaa, however, would bounce back.

Before she left for her current assignment as the 745th Forward Resuscitative and Surgical Detachment commander at Fort Bliss, Texas, she competed in her first Armed Forces Triathlon Championship, representing the All-Army Triathlon team and finishing first in the women’s masters division in April 2023.

SALUTING THIS CYCLE’S HONOREES

3rd Battalion, 34th Infantry Regiment

**DRILL SERGEANT
OF THE CYCLE**
Staff Sgt. Kierra Ivey

**DISTINGUISHED
HONOR GRADUATE**
Pvt. Robert Contreras

**ALPHA COMPANY
SOLDIER LEADER
OF THE CYCLE**
Spc. Ellean Dively

SOLDIER OF THE CYCLE
Pvt. Bryndon Moody

**BRAVO COMPANY
SOLDIER LEADER
OF THE CYCLE**
Pfc. Kardarius Singleton

SOLDIER OF THE CYCLE
Pvt. Jared Thumma

**CHARLIE COMPANY
SOLDIER LEADER
OF THE CYCLE**
Pvt. Mark Springer

SOLDIER OF THE CYCLE
Pvt. Josh Jarvis

**DELTA COMPANY
SOLDIER LEADER
OF THE CYCLE**
Pvt. Gaitlin Hirsch

SOLDIER OF THE CYCLE
Spc. Obrian Colbert

**ECHO COMPANY
SOLDIER LEADER
OF THE CYCLE**
Pvt. Robert Contreras

SOLDIER OF THE CYCLE
Pfc. Kevin Saenz

Events

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The trip costs \$25 and includes includes transportation, rentals and shuttle services. Coolers allowed. For more information, or to register, call the Marion Street Station at (803)751-3484.

AUG. 5
Intramural Golf League

Letters of intent are due for the Intramural Golf League starting Aug. 13. The league is for teams of two active duty Soldiers only. This is a commander's cup event. For more information, call (803) 751-3096.

AUG. 6
Facilitating Flow

9:30-11 a.m., MS Teams. This session will shed light on the experience of flow by discussing its science, features, applications, and benefits across various fields.

Budgeting for Back 2 School

1:30-2:30 p.m., 9810 Liberty Division Road, Room 119. Come learn how to save money on back to school shopping and other educational expenses. Learn

about scholarship opportunities and what you can do now to save on educational expenses in the future.

National Night Out

6 p.m., Patriots Park. The Fort Jackson Police Department hosts the annual National Night Out to highlight the partnership between law enforcement and the community. Law enforcement officers from the S.C. Highway Patrol, Richland County Sheriff's Department, Columbia Police Department, Army Criminal Investigation Division, military police and the U.S. Marshall's Service will be in attendance.

AUG. 8
Making Major Purchases Webinar

1-2:30 p.m., MS Teams. This seminar will provide an overview the financial aspects of making major purchases

AUG. 10
Back to School Color Run

9 a.m., Fort Jackson Youth Sports Complex. Kick off your back-to-school with the Youth Sports Color Run. There will be bounce houses, raffles, a one-mile fun run and a meet and greet with Richland Country Sheriff Department deputies. For more information, call (803) 751-7451.

AUG. 13

Stress! You Can Handle It Webinar

1:30-2:30 p.m., MS Teams. This one-hour class focuses on individual learning techniques to promote physical and emotional wellbeing, heighten awareness, and identify and manage stressors.

AUG. 17
Offshore Fishing Trip

5 a.m., Marion Street Station. Join Outdoor Recreation on a fishing trip to Hilton Head, S.C. The trip costs \$90, which covers transportation, license, bait, and tackle. For more information or to register, call (803) 751-3484.

AUG. 20
Meals in Minutes & Your Budget

9-10 a.m., MS Teams. Learn how to save calories while also optimizing your budget. Armed Forces Wellness Center and Army Community Service provides programs and services to improve and/or maintain readiness of the military community. Registration is required. For more information or to register, call (803) 751-5256.

AUG. 24
Army Ten-Miler

5 a.m., Hilton Field Sports Complex. Come out and run in Fort Jackson's version of the Army's prestigious race. This is a commander's cup event. For more information, call (803) 751-3700.

mation, call (803) 751-3700.

SEPT. 3
Meals in Minutes & Your Budget

1:30-2:30 p.m., 9810 Liberty Division Road, Room 119. This session will teach how to save calories while also optimizing your budget.

SEPT. 5
Early Career Benefits Overview

2-6 p.m., MS Teams. Upon completion of the pre-retirement briefing, participants will know the requirements for retirement eligibility, consequences of making a deposit/redeposit, survivor annuity elections, eligibility for continuing FEHB/FEGLI.

SEPT. 10
Love and Money Matters

10 a.m. to noon, Chaplain Family Life Center. The two-hour workshop will teach effective communication strategies and address common money issues in relationships.

SEPT. 12
Financial Retirement Planning

1-2:30 p.m., MS Teams. Take time to learn about planning for retirement — so you'll be prepared for today's needs and wants, while also paving the way to meet your future financial goals.

DID YOU KNOW: Training units monitor current heat conditions and document their readings hourly.

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

FAITH GROUP	DAY	TIME	PLACE
CATHOLIC MASS	SUNDAY	9:30-10:30 A.M.	MAIN POST CHAPEL
CATHOLIC MASS	MON-FRI	NOON	MAIN POST CHAPEL
GOSPEL SERVICE	SUNDAY	10:30 A.M.	KINGS MOUNTAIN CHAPEL
GENERAL PROTESTANT	SUNDAY	11 A.M. TO NOON	MAIN POST CHAPEL
REVIVE SERVICE	SUNDAY	5 P.M.	MAIN POST CHAPEL
HEATHEN/PAGAN	EVERY 2ND AND 4TH SATURDAY	NOON TO 2 P.M.	CENTURY DIVISION CHAPEL
INITIAL ENTRY TRAINING	DAY	TIME	PLACE
CATHOLIC MASS	SUNDAY	8-9 A.M.	SOLOMON CENTER
PROTESTANT CONSOLIDATED SERVICE	SUNDAY	9:30-10:30 A.M.	SOLOMON CENTER
CHURCH OF CHRIST	SUNDAY	10:30-11:30 A.M.	CENTURY DIVISION CHAPEL
HISPANIC PROTESTANT SERVICE	SUNDAY	8:30-10 A.M.	POST THEATER
ISLAMIC SERVICE	SUNDAY	8-9 A.M.	KINGS MOUNTAIN CHAPEL
JEWISH SERVICE	SUNDAY	10:15-11:30 A.M.	LIGHTNING CHAPEL
THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS	SUNDAY	10:30 A.M. - NOON	WASHINGTON ROAD CHAPEL
HEATHEN/PAGAN	SUNDAY	8:30-9:30 A.M.	CENTURY DIVISION CHAPEL

Be safe out on the water

Leader Staff Reports

Wow, it sure has been a scorching summer so far. Sounds like a good time to hit water in a tube, canoe or kayak, right?

There are plenty of places in the surrounding area where you can get into the water. There are plenty of lakes and rivers in the Midlands that would be perfect for a day on the water.

The U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center offers 10 tips to make you time on the water safer:

1) Always wear your life jacket – Wear a properly fitting U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket at all times on the water.

2) Don't drink while paddling – Avoid alcohol, which impairs the coordination and balance you need to control a canoe, kayak or raft.

3) Stay low– Learn how to enter and exit your boat safely and stay low in your boat when possible. Most paddle sport drownings are the result of capsizing.

4) Keep your balance – Don't overload your boat. Distribute passengers, secure gear evenly and low, and leave your dog on land.

5) Practice the wet exit – Learn how to get out of, hang on to, right, and re-enter your capsized boat.

6) Don't get left in the cold – Dress for the weather conditions and be prepared for cold-water immersion. Hypothermia is a danger any time of the year.

7) Plan ahead – Know the water you're paddling, plan your day of paddling, and file a "float plan" so that someone knows where to find you and when you plan to return.



Army News Service photo
A kayaker prepares to learn how to use his boat during training. The Army Combat Readiness Center recommends kayakers take courses to learn how to safely paddle their craft.

8) Never paddle alone – Companions can come to your aid if you get into trouble. New paddlers should paddle with someone more experienced – it's a great way to learn and remain safe if there's a mishap.

9) Be in command – Know how to move your boat forward, back, and sideways, and how to stop using paddle strokes. Watch ahead for hazards like undercut rocks, bridge pilings, large branches and trees, big drop-offs, or other boats.

10) Learn about your boat – Consider taking a canoe or kayak safety class. Call (800) 929-5162 or visit www.acanet.org to learn about classes offered by the American Canoe Association.

Scam

Continued from Page 8

cial institution, change passwords to important accounts and considering doing a credit freeze with the credit bureaus. Thousands of people are victims of identity theft and other scams each year, so don't delay in protecting your financial future.

According to the Army Criminal Investigation Division knowledge about how the service operates can prevent someone from being a target:

■ Soldiers, Soldier's families or Soldier's friends are not required to pay money so a Soldier is allowed to take leave.

■ Soldiers do not require anyone to request leave in order to be awarded leave.

■ Soldiers cannot buy out of enlistment contracts or buy early retirements.

■ Soldiers do not need anyone to pay for health benefits. Health benefits for Soldiers and military families are substantial.

■ Soldiers do not find bags of diamonds or cash.

■ Soldiers do not need permission to marry.

■ Soldiers do not need to pay for retirement.

■ Soldiers do not need money to buy food or housing.

■ Soldiers do not pay to return stateside after being discharged.

If you are a victim of a military romance scam you can report it to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Internet Crime Complaint Center at: <https://www.ic3.gov/>.

Army Community Service Financial Readiness Program counselors are available to assist with protecting your financial information.

To schedule an appointment, contact ACS at (803) 751-5256.

BEAT THE HEAT: Extreme Heat

Heat-related deaths are preventable

WHAT:

Extreme heat or heat waves occur when the temperature reaches extremely high levels or when the combination of heat and humidity causes the air to become oppressive.

WHO:

Children
More males than females are affected
Older adults
Outside workers
People with disabilities

WHERE:

Houses with little to no AC
Construction worksites
Cars

HOW to AVOID:

Stay hydrated with water, avoid sugary beverages
Stay cool in an air conditioned area
Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothes

During extreme heat the temperature in your car could be deadly!

Outside Temperature 80°

Inside	Time Elapsed
109°	20 minutes
118°	40 minutes
123°	60 minutes

HEAT ALERTS: Know the difference.

HEAT OUTLOOK	HEAT WATCHES	HEAT WARNING/ADVISORY
Minor Excessive heat event in 3 to 7 days	Excessive heat event in 12 to 48 hours	Major Excessive heat event in next 36 hours

DID YOU KNOW?

Those living in urban areas may be at a greater risk from the effects of a prolonged heat wave than those living in rural areas.

Most heat-related illnesses occur because of overexposure to heat or over-exercising.

Sunburn can significantly slow the skin's ability to release excess heat.

During 1999–2009, an average of 658 people died each year from heat in the United States.

\$30 BILLION estimated total cost of the 2012 US drought and heatwave.

For more information on ways to beat the heat please visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat>

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Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response

VICTORY... STARTS HERE



Soldiers crowd the Post Exchange in a building that now houses the U.S. Army Basic Combat Training Museum. The museum's 50th birthday is today.

Courtesy photo